

Message Text

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ACTION HEW-08

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 SCI-06 PA-03 PRS-01 USIA-15

CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 DRC-01 /056 W

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R 121523Z SEP 73

FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1042

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: TGEN, NI

SUBJECT: NIGERIA'S NEW DRUG QUALITY CONTROL BODY SEEKS
COLLABORATION WITH U.S. FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION

1. EMBASSY HAS BEEN APPROACHED BY DR. TOMMY OLAWUYI OKE, OF NIGERIAN FEDERAL MINISTRY OF HEALTH, FOR AID IN OPENING UP LINES OF COMMUNICATION WITH U.S. FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION. OKE HAS BEEN CHARGED WITH ESTABLISHING NIGERIAN EQUIVALENT OF FDA, FROM SCRATCH, AND INTENDS TO PATTERN THE ORGANIZATION INITIALLY ON FDA MODEL.

2. OKE'S APPOINTMENT COMES IN WAKE OF RECENT PRESS ATTACKS ON INFLUX OF DANGEROUS PHARMACEUTICALS INTO NIGERIA, A PROBLEM WHICH HAS BECOME POLITICAL ISSUE OF SOME PROPORTION HERE. IN MAY OF THIS YEAR, FOR EXAMPLE PRESS LAUDED WESTERN STATE MINISTRY OF HEALTH FOR BANNING SALE OF DRUGS CONTAINING PHENACETIN, AND URGED FMG TO FOLLOW EXAMPLE BY ESTABLISHING CENTRAL DRUG CONTROL BODY. IT HAS BEEN CHARGED BY SOME, INCLUDING FEDERAL COMMISSIONER FOR HEALTH ALHAJI AMINU KANO, THAT NIGERIA HAS BECOME "DUMPING GROUND" FOR FOREIGN SUPPLIERS SEEKING TO FLOOD THE MARKET WITH DANGEROUS PHARMACEUTICAL PRODUCTS, SUCH AS PHENACETIN, NO LONGER ALLOWED FOR SALE IN ADVANCED COUNTRIES. WHATEVER THE VALIDITY OF THESE REMARKS, THEY ARE INDICATIVE OF EMOTIONALISM BEHIND THIS ISSUE.

3. DR. OKE CAN BE CONSIDERED FIRM FRIEND OF US, AND A POSSIBLE
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"COMER". YOUNG, SOFT-SPOKEN, AND FORWARD-LOOKING, HE HAS RECENTLY COMPLETED TEN YEARS OF EDUCATION AND WORK EXPERIENCE IN USA.

DURING THIS PERIOD HE OBTAINED B.S. IN PHARMACY AT U. OF OKLAHOMA, M.S. AND PHD. IN PHARMACY AT U. OF MICHIGAN; WAS POSTDOCTORATE FELLOW IN DRUG ANALYSIS AND CONTROL AT U. OF CALIFORNIA MEDICAL CENTER; ACQUIRED AN AMERICAN WIFE; AND WORKED AS SENIOR RESARV SCIENTIST FOR PFIZER & CO. IN NEW YORK. HE ALSO HOLDS ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP IN AMERICAN PHARMACEUTICAL ASSOCIATION, AMERICA SOCIETY OF HOSPITAL PHARMACY, AND AMERICAN PHARMACEUTICAL ASSOCIATION'S ACADEMY OF PHARMACEUTICAL SCIENCE. HE CONFIDES THAT HIS RIVALS FOR PRESENT APPOINTMENT WERE BRITISH-TRAINED SCIENTISTS, ADVOCATING DRUG CONTROL SYSTEM ALONG BRITISH LINES, BUT THAT DECISION WAS MADE IN FAVOR OF US-TRAINED CANDIDATE.

4. CONSIDERING OKE'S BACKGROUND, SIGNIFICANCE OF HIS TASK, AND POLITICAL OVERTONES INVOLVED, EMBASSY FEELS THAT FDA COOPERATION THIS FIELD COULD YIELD POSITIVE BENEFITS IN TERMS OF FMG-US RELATIONS. WE THEREFORE URGE EXPEDITIOUS RESPONSE TO THIS INITIATIVE.

ACTION REQUESTED

5. DR. OKE WOULD APPRECIATE RECEIVING ANY BASIC FDA DOCUMENTS RELATING TO ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION, TECHNICAL CRITERIA FOR DEFINING DANGEROUS PHARMACEUTICAL PRODUCTS, AND ANY OTHER MATERIAL THAT COULD SERVE AS MODEL FOR PLANNING PURPOSES. COPY OF FDA REGULATIONS, OR SUITABLE CMDENSATION, WOULD BE USEFUL. EMBASSY RECOMMENDS THESE BE SENT VIA AIR POUCH.

6. DR. OKE WOULD ALSO LIKE TO ESTABLISH CONTACT WITH APPROPRIATE FDA OFFICIALS FOR PURPOSES OF DIALOGUE ON THIS PROJECT, AND FOR CONTEMPLATED FOLLOW-UP TRIP TO U.S. 6-8 MONTHS HENCE. WOULD APPRECIATE RECEIVING NAMES OF APPROPRIATE CONTACTS. FOR FUTURE REFERENCE, OKE'S MAILING ADDRESS IS:

DR. TOMMY OLAWUYI OKE
FEDERAL DRUG QUALITY CONTROL LABORATORY
P.M.B. 2007, YABA
MEDICAL COMPOUND
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FEDERAL MINISTRY OF HEALTH
YABA, LAGOS STATE
NIGERIA
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